

Application No.: 09/835,146
Preliminary Amendment dated: December 15, 2004
Reply to Office Action of: August 25, 2004

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as indicated. A complete set of the claims is included below, reflecting added subject matter (*underlining*) and deleted subject matter (*strikethrough*), as well as the current status of each claim. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-21. (Canceled).

22. (Currently Amended) A method for controlling voice or data or both types of communications from callers, for use with a communication facility including remote terminals for individual callers, wherein the remote terminals include a digital input device for providing digital responsive signals, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving caller number identification signals indicative of at least a portion of a caller's number from the communication facility;

cueing select ones of the remote terminals to prompt selective actuation by an individual caller of the digital input device to provide responsive signals;

selectively identifying the responsive signals from the select ones of the remote terminals as digital data signals, or digital control signals, wherein certain of the responsive signals can serve as digital data signals, digital control signals, or both, the responsive signals including signals indicative of a customer identification number for the individual caller that is utilized to access a file for the individual caller;

testing at least a portion of the customer identification number for approval to proceed;

recording the caller number identification signals from the communication facility as additional data for the individual caller; and

selectively processing a call entirely on the basis of digital control signals and digital data signals, or alternatively transferring a call from the individual caller to an attended terminal and displaying at least a portion of data stored in the file for the

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individual caller to an operator at the attended terminal under control of the responsive signals indicative of the customer identification number and displaying at least a portion of responsive signals and at least a portion of the customer identification number at the attended terminal wherein the operator at the attended terminal is capable of entering other data to facilitate completion of the call from the individual caller.

23. (Previously Presented) A method as defined in claim 22, further comprising the step of:

qualifying callers with respect to limited use.

24. (Previously Presented) A method as defined in claim 22, further comprising the steps of:

providing a plurality of format configurations, and selecting one from the plurality of format configurations.

25. (Previously Presented) A method as defined in claim 22, further comprising the step of:

recognizing a first time caller.

26. (Previously Presented) A method as defined in claim 22, further comprising the step of:

upon recognizing a first time caller, transferring the first time caller to the attended terminal.

27. (Previously Presented) A method as defined in claim 26, further comprising the step of:

testing the caller number identification signals to identify the first time caller prior to transferring first time caller to the attended terminal.

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28. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 22, further comprising the step of:

receiving caller credit card number data signals as certain of the responsive signals.

29. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 28, wherein the receiving step also includes receiving credit card expiration date data signals as certain of the responsive signals.

30. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 29, wherein the credit card expiration date data signals are verified.

31. (Previously Presented) A method as defined in claim 28, further comprising the step of:

recognizing a first time caller.

32. (Previously Presented) A method as defined in claim 31, further comprising the step of:

upon recognizing the first time caller, transferring the first time caller to the attended terminal.

33. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 28, wherein for billing purposes the caller credit card number data signals are indicative of the customer identification number.

34. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 33, wherein the caller credit card number data signals are tested for approval.

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35. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 34, wherein the caller credit card number data signals are tested for limited use.

36. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 28, wherein the caller credit card number signals are verified.

37. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein access to the file for the individual caller is controlled at least in part by the caller number identification signals.

38. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein the data entered by the operator includes data provided by the individual caller.

39. (Previously Presented) A method as defined in claim 22, wherein the caller number identification signals control processing of at least certain of the digital data signals.

40. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein the remote terminals include a voice communication device for providing audio responsive signals, and the method further comprises the steps of:

selectively identifying the responsive signals as digital data signals, digital control signals, or audio signals; and

recording the audio signals in digital format.

41. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 40, further comprising the step of:

reproducing recorded audio signals as caller voice data at a remote terminal.

42. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 40, further comprising the step of:

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providing the audio signals recorded in digital format to a terminal via a coupling means.

43. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 40, further comprising the step of:

subsequently processing recorded audio signals.

44. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein the certain of the data stored in the file for the individual caller includes address data.

45. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 22, further comprising the step of:

displaying caller name data at the attended terminal.

46. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 22, further comprising the step of:

displaying caller address data at the attended terminal.

47. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 22, further comprising the step of:

displaying caller telephone number data at the attended terminal.

48. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein in the testing step, the customer identification number is tested against the file including negative file data.

49. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein the responsive signals further include an additional form of caller identification data.

50. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 49, wherein the additional form of caller identification data is a caller credit card number.

51. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 49, wherein the additional form of caller identification data is a caller customer number data.

52. (Currently Amended) A method for controlling voice-data communications with callers with a system operating a format for use with a communication facility including remote terminals for use by certain individual callers, wherein the remote terminals include a digital input device for providing digital responsive signals, the method comprising the steps of:

interfacing the certain individual callers with an interface unit of the system operating the format;

prompting the individual callers via a voice generator to provide responsive signals representative of identification data via the digital input device of the remote terminals;

receiving from the individual callers responsive signals representative of caller identification data;

comparing the caller identification data received against a file on the individual callers to determine if the caller identification data received is already of record;

if the caller identification data received is already of record, utilizing the caller identification data received to access the file to locate other data associated with the caller identification data;

selectively processing a call entirely on the basis of digital control signals and digital data signals, or alternatively transferring calls from at least certain select of the individual callers to an attended terminal; and

displaying at the attended terminal at least a portion of the other data associated with the caller identification data and at least a portion of the caller identification data entered by the individual callers as responsive signals via the digital input device.

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53. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 52, wherein the other data displayed includes caller name data.

54. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 53, wherein the data displayed further includes caller address data.

55. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 53, wherein additional data relating to the call is order data.

56. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 55, wherein the order data includes item number data.

57. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 56, wherein the individual callers further provide data relating to the item number.

58. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 57, wherein the further data relates to a color of the item.

59. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 57, wherein the further data relates to a size of the item.

60. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 52, wherein the caller identification data provided by the individual caller includes customer number data.

61. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 52, further comprising the step of:

selecting the format from a multiple configuration of formats.

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62. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 52, wherein the displaying step includes:
displaying at least a portion of the data entered by the individual callers and stored during an instant call.

63. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 52, wherein the displaying step includes:
displaying at least a portion of the data stored prior to an instant call.

64. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 52, wherein the displaying step includes:
displaying at least a portion of the data stored prior to the instant call and at least a portion of the data entered by the callers during the instant call.

65. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 52, wherein the data displayed includes caller order data.

66. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 65, wherein the caller order data displayed is entered during the instant call.

67. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 52, wherein the data displayed includes caller telephone number data.

68. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 67, wherein the caller order data displayed relates to previously stored data.

69. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 68, wherein the previously stored data includes caller credit card data which is further displayed.

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70. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 68, wherein the previously stored data includes expiration date data which is further displayed.

71. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 52, wherein the caller identification data is a caller's bank credit card number.

72. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 52, wherein the caller identification data is compared against the file including negative file data.

73. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 52, wherein the responsive signals provided by the individual callers include caller credit card number data.

74. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 52, wherein the responsive signals provided by the individual callers include credit card expiration date data.

75. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 52, wherein the responsive signals provided by the individual callers include credit card number data and credit card expiration date data and both are verified.

76. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 52, wherein the caller identification data is compared against the file including negative file data.

77. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 52, wherein the responsive signals provided by the individual callers include caller credit card number data.

78. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 52, wherein the responsive signals provided by the individual callers include credit card expiration date data.

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79. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 52, wherein the responsive signals provided by the individual callers include credit card number data and credit card expiration date data and both are verified.

80. (Currently Amended) A method for controlling voice-data communications with callers for use with a communication facility including remote terminals for individual callers from a pool of individual callers, wherein the remote terminals include a digit input device for providing responsive signals, the method comprising the steps of:

cuing via a voice generator select ones of the remote terminals to prompt selective actuation by certain callers from the pool of individual callers of the digit input device to provide responsive signals:

receiving responsive signals from the individual callers including caller credit card number data and caller expiration date data entered via the digit input device;

testing the caller credit card number data and the caller expiration date data for approval to proceed;

receiving at least certain select of caller number identification signals as identification signals; and

selectively processing a call entirely on the basis of digital control signals and digital data signals, or alternatively transferring certain of the callers to an attended terminal and displaying at the attended terminal certain of the responsive signals entered by the callers via the digital input device during the course of calls whereby an operator enters other data relating to the call at the attended terminal.

81. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 80, wherein the testing step involves testing the caller credit card number data against a negative list of credit card numbers.

82. (Currently Amended) A method for controlling voice-data communications with callers, with a system operating a format for use with a communication facility including remote terminals for use by certain of the plurality of individual callers, wherein the remote terminals

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include a digital input device for providing digital responsive signals, the method comprising the steps of:

interfacing the certain individual callers with an interface unit of the system operating the format;
prompting the individual callers to provide responsive signals via the digital input device of the remote terminals;
receiving from the individual callers responsive signals representative of caller identification data;
selectively processing a call entirely on the basis of digital control signals and digital data signals, or alternatively transferring at least certain select of the individual caller to an attended terminal based on a condition initiated by an individual caller; and
the condition automatically causing a display of other data retrieved from a caller file associated with the caller identification data including at least a portion of the caller identification data to appear at the attended terminal for display to an operator whereby to allow the operator to enter additional data on behalf of the caller.

83. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 82, wherein the display is automatically caused at the attended terminal subsequent to an individual caller entering an incorrect account number as caller identification data.

84. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 82, wherein the display is automatically caused at the attended terminal subsequent to an individual caller entering an invalid account number as caller identification data.

85. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 82, wherein the display is automatically caused at the attended terminal subsequent to an individual caller entering a specific code to request an operator.